United Nations ST/IC/2000/85

Secretariat

10 November 2000

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2001 competitive examination for Chinese-language editors, translators and verbatim reporters**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-3 level and below who wish to take the competitive examination for Chinese-language editors, translators and verbatim reporters in 2001, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 of 23 March 1998.

2. A competitive examination for Chinese-language editors, translators and verbatim reporters will be held from 12 to 14 February 2001 in Beijing, Geneva, New York, Vienna and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of this examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for Chinese-language editors, translators or verbatim reporters will be filled. When vacancies occur, successful candidates will be recruited from the roster, subject to the requirements of the services in terms of expertise and language combinations.

3. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as qualified external candidates. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations and staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or special missions are considered external candidates for the purpose of this examination. Such candidates, if successful, will be offered a new appointment with the United Nations subject to normal United Nations recruitment procedures and standards. Staff members who are successful in the examination and are selected for inclusion in the roster will be assigned to fill vacancies for Chinese language posts as they occur in the language services in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and Bangkok. Assignments are subject to rotation and successful candidates may, after initial appointment, be reassigned to other duty stations according to the needs of the Organization. Successful candidates are expected to serve a **minimum of five years** in language posts. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 10 to 13 below.

4. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have Chinese as their main language;[1]

(b) Have a perfect command of Chinese and an excellent knowledge of English or French.[2] Knowledge of other official languages of the United Nations will be regarded as a great asset. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2001.

00-74305 (E) 271100

candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For this purpose, staff members should either attach to their application a photocopy of a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) Hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which Chinese is the language of instruction;

(d) Attach to the application form, which must be filled out in English, a one-page essay in Chinese (approximately 400 words) on the importance of working for the United Nations, a one-page essay in English or French (approximately 300 words) explaining why they are interested in translation related work and a translation into Chinese of either the English or French text annexed to the application form.

5. The requirement for a university degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status mentioned in paragraph 4 (c) may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is Chinese, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

6. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their applications. **The Board's decisions are final.**

7. The written examination will consist of translation, editing and verbatim reporting parts and detailed instructions will be given on each of the papers. The examination will last for three days:

(a) The translation part will consist of four papers:

(i) Translation into Chinese of a general text in English or French (three hours, morning of 12 February 2001). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers in the translation, editing and verbatim reporting parts marked;

(ii) Summary in Chinese of a speech in English or French (two hours, afternoon of 12 February 2001);

(iii) Translation into Chinese of two specialized texts in English or French (three hours, morning of 13 February 2001). Candidates will be given a choice of economic, legal, scientific, social and technical texts;

(iv) Translation into Chinese of a text in one of the official languages of the United Nations other than the languages selected in (i), (ii) and (iii) above (two hours, afternoon of 13 February 2001). Candidates who have selected French for papers (i), (ii) and (iii) above are required to take this test and select the English text for translation. This test is not mandatory for other candidates, but the language abilities demonstrated will be considered in the overall evaluation of the candidates;

(b) The editing part will consist of editing two texts in Chinese i.e., a general text and a United Nations resolution on the basis of an English or French model (three hours, morning of 14 February 2001);

(c) The verbatim reporting part will consist of bringing the transcript of the Chinese interpretation of a speech into line with the original English or French text of the speech and editing the transcript of a speech delivered in Chinese (three hours, afternoon of 14 February 2001).

The use of a dictionary or any other reference material will **not** be permitted during the examination. Similarly, candidates may not use personal computers to prepare their papers.

8. On the basis of the results of the written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview, which is projected to take place in the course of June 2001. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited for an interview should **not**

assume that they will automatically be offered an assignment.

9. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are **not** subject to appeal. The Board **does not** release individual scores or results. When vacancies occur, successful candidates will be assigned from the roster, subject to the requirements of the services in terms of expertise and language combinations.

10. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as Chinese-language editors, translators or verbatim reporters for a trial period of two years. Staff members below the P-2 level or who are in the General Service category will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels. During the trial period, following on-the-job training if necessary, successful candidates should be prepared to use a computer workstation and to operate a dictaphone. In addition, in order to be confirmed as a verbatim reporter or as an editor, successful candidates would need to have word-processing skills or to acquire them through on-the-job training during the two-year trial period.

11. During that same trial period, staff members will receive professional training designed flexibly so as to permit their reassignment, if warranted, based on their preference and demonstrated aptitude for a given language function. Successful candidates assigned directly to duty stations away from Headquarters will normally be required to spend the first six months of their trial period in the corresponding service at Headquarters.

12. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services and the Office of Human Resources Management may be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their functions at the P-3 level. Staff members on fixed-term appointment will be eligible to be considered for permanent appointment subject to the requirement of the staff rules in force. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

13. In accordance with the needs of the service/sections, successful candidates may be called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

14. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, **not later than 22 December 2000**, to:

> 2001 competitive examination for Chinese-language editors, translators and verbatim reporters
> Examinations and Tests Section
> Specialist Services Division
> Office for Human Resources Management
> Room S-2575-E
> United Nations Secretariat
> New York, N.Y. 10017
> United States of America
> Fax No.: (1-212) 963-3683

Applications received after the above deadline will not be considered.

15. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to return their applications directly to the Specialist Services Division through the chief administrative officer or director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations by 22 December 2000, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division.

Notes

[1] "Main language" is to be understood as the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to Chinese as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

[2] Candidates claiming an excellent knowledge of French are also required to have a good working knowledge of English.

Application

2001 competitive examination for Chinese-language editors, translators and verbatim reporters[1]

Index No.[2] ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Last name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Category ☐☐ Level ☐☐

First name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Date of entry on duty: Month ☐☐ Year ☐☐☐☐

Type of contract: _____ Expiration date: _____

Department/office:[3] _____ Duty station: _____

Room No. _____ Tel. extension _____ Fax extension _____ email _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes ☐ in 19 ☐☐ No ☐

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes ☐ in 19 ☐☐ No ☐

If yes, which examination(s) _____

What is your main language?[4] ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

A. Knowledge of other languages[5]

Language(s)	*United Nations language programme (indicate highest level and date)*	*Courses taken at other institutions (name and location)*

B. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned above

Language	*Read*		*Understand*		*Speak*		*Write*	
	Easily	*Not easily*	*Easily*	*Not easily*	*Fluently*	*Not fluently*	*Easily*	*Not easily*

C. University degree or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications[6]

Name of institution, place and country	*Language of instruction*	*Attended from/to*		*Degree*[6] *or equivalent*	*Main field of study*
		Month/year	*Month/year*		

D. Secondary school qualifications

Name of institution, place and country	*Language of instruction*	*Attended from/to*		*Certificate[6] or equivalent*	*Main field of study*
		Month/year	*Month/year*		

E. Describe work experience (giving dates and length of time) in editing, translation, verbatim reporting or related fields, if any.

I have read information circular ST/IC/2000/85 and I understand that, if I am successful in the 2001 competitive examination for Chinese-language editors, translators and verbatim reporters and recommended for inclusion in the roster, my assignment as a Chinese-language editor, translator or verbatim reporter will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 10 and 11 of that circular.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Notes

[1] Staff members applying for this examination **must complete this section**. In addition, staff members **must attach** written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications from establishments at which Chinese is the principal language of instruction. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless they were convoked for the G to P examination for promotion to the Professional category or another language examination. Applications that are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member **for completion and resubmission within the deadline for receipt of applications** in the Specialist Services Division. In this connection, staff members are informed that extensions for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division will **not** be granted. Therefore, staff members are advised to submit their applications without delay.

[2] Appears normally on your monthly salary statement and personnel action (P-5) forms. If not, please contact your Executive Officer to obtain your number.

[3] Please indicate department/office, e.g., Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Office at Geneva, United Nations Office at Vienna or other (specify).

[4] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to Chinese as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

[5] Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 (b) of information circular ST/IC/2000/85.

[6] Give exact name and title in original language. Do not translate or equate.

Annex

(Applicants are required to attach their translations into Chinese of either text 1 or text 2 to their application form)

Text 1 (English)

Cultural identity is first and foremost our spontaneous identification as individuals with our linguistic, local, regional and national community and its specific values (ethical, aesthetic, etc.); the manner in which we absorb its history, traditions, customs and lifestyles; our feeling of undergoing, sharing or shaping a common destiny; the way in which we project ourselves into a collective self in which we continually see our own reflection, enabling us to build up our personalities through education and to express them in work, which in turn affects the world in which we live.

Although cultural identity is not necessarily asserted as such, and although its shapes and forms may be shadowy, it is nevertheless for each of us as individuals a sort of fundamental equation that determines, positively or negatively, the way in which we relate to our community and to the world at large.

It is, however, becoming increasingly clear that what constitutes the very basis of the cultural life of peoples is threatened. The worldwide influence of a certain number of cultural models, the effects of advertising and the media, the standardization of tastes and lifestyles induced by standardized production methods, the erosion of certain traditional values and the difficulty of identifying new ones, all these phenomena help to explain the concern of very many societies: to preserve, defend and promote their cultural identities.

For the communities concerned, it is obviously not a question of putting up artificial barriers to outside influences and falling back on the assets of a culture they have inherited from the past. On the contrary, the objective is to enable all peoples to master the knowledge and know-how of the modern world, to strengthen their own potential exchanges with others. For the process of modernization takes on its real meaning only if it establishes a new balance between the factors of change and the demands for continuity on the basis of the principle of the equal dignity of all cultures.

Urban development, industrialization, pollution, armed conflicts or the unplanned development of mass tourism present ever-increasing threats to our cultural heritage, whether in the form of works of art and architecture or cultural and natural sites.

Measures to defend mankind's cultural heritage, like those designed to combat the illicit traffic in works of art and archaeological treasures, are rooted in a widespread awareness of present-day problems. This is why training and information have a decisive role to play in mobilizing public opinion. Moreover, whenever possible, all traditional technical resources, and new technologies, must be put to use in order not only to preserve, but also to revitalize this heritage, which is in danger of being lost forever.

Culture has always been the privileged instrument of communication between peoples, for it can make a powerful contribution to the strengthening of international

understanding by recognizing the specificity of each society's forms of expression and cultural values.

For this reason, cultural cooperation in its different forms can become a factor of prime importance in combating ignorance, intolerance and all forms of prejudice, in particular racial prejudice, which persist throughout the world and which generate mistrust and hatred, give rise to tensions and wars and inhibit attempts to secure disarmament and establish peace.

Text 2 (French)

L'identification spontanée d'un homme avec sa communauté locale, régionale, nationale, linguistique, les valeurs éthiques et esthétiques qui la caractérisent; la manière dont il s'approprie l'histoire, les traditions, les coutumes, les modes de vie; le sentiment qu'il a de subir, partager ou changer un destin commun; la façon dont il se projette dans un moi collectif qui lui renvoie sans cesse sa propre image, qui lui permet de construire sa personnalité par l'éducation et de l'épanouir par le travail en agissant sur le monde, c'est d'abord cela l'identité culturelle.

Même si elle ne s'affirme pas nécessairement comme telle ou que ses contours sont plus ou moins discernables, l'identité culturelle joue pour chaque homme le rôle d'une sorte d'équation fondamentale qui détermine, positivement ou négativement, sa relation au monde ainsi qu'au corps social.

Or, il apparaît aujourd'hui de plus en plus nettement que ce qui constitue la base même de la vie culturelle des populations est menacé. La diffusion à l'échelle planétaire de modèles culturels extérieurs aux cultures locales, le formidable écho de la publicité et des médias, la standardisation des goûts et des modes de vie liées à l'universalisation des modes de production, l'érosion de certaines valeurs traditionnelles et la difficile émergence de valeurs nouvelles expliquent qu'un grand nombre de sociétés soient animées d'une préoccupation centrale : préserver, défendre et promouvoir leur identité culturelle.

Il ne s'agit pas, bien évidemment, pour les communautés concernées de se soustraire de façon artificielle aux influences extérieures afin de se replier frileusement sur les acquis d'une culture héritée du passé. Bien au contraire, l'objectif est de permettre à chaque peuple de maîtriser les savoirs et savoir-faire du monde moderne et de renforcer sa capacité d'innovation tout en enrichissant ses échanges avec les autres cultures. Car le processus de modernisation n'a de sens que s'il tend à établir de nouveaux équilibres entre les facteurs du changement et les exigences de la continuité, à partir du principe de l'égale dignité de toutes les cultures.

Sous l'effet de l'urbanisation, de l'industrialisation, de la pollution, des conflits armés ou d'un développement inconsidéré du tourisme de masse, les biens culturels (œuvres d'art et d'architecture) ainsi que les sites culturels et naturels sont de plus en plus menacés de dégradation.

L'action en faveur de la préservation du patrimoine culturel de l'humanité comme la lutte contre le trafic illicite des œuvres d'art et d'archéologie commencent par la prise de conscience à grande échelle des problèmes qui se posent aujourd'hui. C'est pourquoi la formation et l'information ont un rôle décisif à jouer, dans la mesure où elles peuvent favoriser une mobilisation des opinions publiques. Par ailleurs, toutes les ressources des techniques traditionnelles, quand cela est possible, et des technologies nouvelles doivent être exploitées non seulement pour préserver, mais aussi pour faire vivre ce patrimoine qui risque d'être irrémédiablement perdu.

La culture est depuis toujour l'instrument privilégié de la communication entre les peuples, dans la mesure où elle peut contribuer puissamment au renforcement de la compréhension internationale, tout en reconnaissant les spécificités des formes d'expression et des valeurs culturelles propres à chaque société.

C'est pourquoi la coopération culturelle sous ses différentes formes peut devenir un facteur d'importance capitale pour combattre l'ignorance, l'intolérance et les préjugés, notamment raciaux, qui persistent dans le monde, engendrent méfiance et agressivité, provoquent des tensions ou des guerres, entravent les initiatives prises en faveur du désarmement et de la paix.